



**BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON
ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS**

**STATEMENT OF SANDY K. BARUAH
NOMINEE,
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF COMMERCE FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**

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Mr. Chairman, Senator Jeffords, and Members of the Committee,

I am pleased to appear before you as the President's nominee to become Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development. I am deeply honored to be President Bush's nominee for this post and grateful for the opportunity to serve. I also very much appreciate Commerce Secretary Gutierrez's leadership and his confidence and support.

Before I begin, please allow me to introduce the most important people in my life. My wife, Lisa, is with me today along with our son, Isaac, who is happy to be here today because it's one less day of school.

Today, I would like to give you a better sense of what I hope to accomplish as the Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development if given that opportunity. Let me begin by stating my strong commitment to the mission of the Economic Development Administration. Our mission at EDA is to "*lead the federal economic development agenda by promoting innovation and competitiveness, preparing American regions for growth and success in the worldwide economy.*" We do this by helping to create the right conditions for economic growth and expanded opportunity. We promote innovation. We foster entrepreneurship. We enhance competitiveness.

With the support of this Committee and the Senate, and the professional staff of EDA, I am confident that I can build upon the strong record of

accomplishment established by the previous Assistant Secretary, David A. Sampson, and support Secretary Gutierrez's commitment to excellence.

After four years at the Commerce Department as an EDA senior staff member – Deputy Assistant Secretary for Program Operations and Chief of Staff – I know that the role of the Assistant Secretary can be broken down into three primary categories: *policy, stewardship and leadership*.

From a policy perspective, I intend to maintain EDA's focus on the creation and retention of higher-skill, higher-wage jobs in America's economically distressed communities. Under my leadership, if given the opportunity, EDA will continue to accomplish this by promoting leading-edge, market-based strategies, encouraging regional and comprehensive development approaches, and focusing on the critical role the private sector plays in providing opportunity and creating healthy vibrant communities.

From a stewardship perspective, it is never far from my mind that Administration appointees are only temporary custodians of the legacy we are asked to manage. As all good stewards, we should leave what was entrusted to us in better condition than we found it. I know that is the case of my predecessor. EDA is a more efficient and effective organization than it was four years ago. I am proud to have played a role in this accomplishment.

I am proud that EDA was among the first federal programs to implement a robust Balanced Scorecard, and in fact was inducted into the Balanced Scorecard Hall of Fame in 2004. The successful development of this strategy and performance measurement tool has helped EDA achieve good ratings from the Office of Management and Budget's Program Assessment Rating Tool (PART).

Also, as you know, the Congress reauthorized EDA in 2004. During the past several years, EDA's job creation efforts have been greatly strengthened by a pattern of increased private sector leverage of federal grant dollars. In fact, EDA's private sector leverage – the ratio of private sector dollars invested for every EDA investment dollar – has increased from 9-to-1 to 40-to-1 in the past four years. We understand that an economic development project does not begin to approach its potential until the private sector is ready, willing and able to invest in the enterprise – this is how jobs are created.

A large part of stewardship is management. In addition to my four years in a senior capacity at EDA, I have a background in management. Prior to joining President Bush's Administration, I was a senior management consultant

with Performance Consulting Group, a successful corporate management consulting firm with several Fortune 500 clients, such as Intel, KeyBank, US Bank, Disney World and others. My prior government service includes staff positions with U.S. Senator Bob Packwood and service in the Presidential Administration of George H. W. Bush, with appointed positions in the office of the Secretary of Labor and the Secretary of the Interior.

From a leadership perspective, the Assistant Secretary has many responsibilities. From serving as an effective advocate of the President's agenda, to establishing the highest of ethical standards for the agency to emulate, to working cooperatively with the Congress, to reaching out and listening to the people and organizations touched by EDA's programs, and dealing openly, respectfully and honestly with EDA's career professional staff. These are all challenges that I do not take lightly, yet am confident that I am equal to. I believe my combination of experience in EDA, coupled with my public and private sector experience make me well qualified to lead EDA.

Leadership will be important as EDA addresses the important challenges ahead, such as assisting BRAC-impacted communities transition their economies, helping the Gulf Region rebuild their economy after the devastating impact of Hurricane Katrina, supporting President Bush's Strengthening America's Communities Initiative, and continuing to deliver excellent federal services in an era of modest financial resources.

Once again, I am honored by President Bush's confidence in me and I look forward to earning the confidence of this Committee and the United States Senate.

I have been richly blessed with family, friends and opportunity. I am especially thankful for Lisa, for her love and for all the sacrifices she has made to make my service in the Administration possible. It has been an honor for both of us. Thank you again for this opportunity to appear before you today, and for your consideration of my nomination. I would be pleased to respond to any questions you may have.